

What Now?

God explains the spirit realm using illustrations humans can comprehend.



[Revelation 6:1-8](#) MWT Then I saw the Lamb break open the first of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say in a voice that sounded like thunder, "Come!" (2) I looked, and there was a white horse. Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown. He (Jesus) went forth conquering and to complete his conquest (in the midst of his enemies; using the sword of his mouth). ([Rev 19:15](#); [Psa 110:1-2](#)) (3) Then the Lamb broke open the second seal; and I heard the second living creature say, "Come!" (4) Another horse came out, a red one. Its rider was given the power to bring war on the earth, so that people should kill each other (he represents our day's spirit of hate and intolerance). He was given a large sword. (5) Then the Lamb broke open the third seal; and I heard the third living creature say, "Come!" I looked, and there was a black horse. Its rider held a pair of scales in his hand. (6) I heard what sounded like a voice coming from among the four living creatures, which said, "A quart of wheat for a day's wages, and three quarts of barley for a day's wages. But do not damage the olive trees and the vineyards!" (7) Then the Lamb broke open the fourth seal; and I heard the fourth living creature say, "Come!" (8) I looked, and there was a pale-colored horse. Its rider was named Death, and Hades followed close behind. They were given authority over one fourth of the earth, to kill by means of war, famine, disease, and wild animals.

My Faith!

Written December, 2021...

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What now...? Does what happens to you depend on what you “believe” comes next? I do hope Christ’s words will be embraced by the majority of humankind. From what Jesus said, however, I expect it will be only a few. ([Mat 7:12-16](#)) To understand what I attempt to convey presupposes a faith in God our [Creator](#), and in his son Jesus Christ. ([Pro 30:4 of 4-6](#)) *This is for those who have heard God’s only later day command* (since the birth of Christ) *to hear his son.* ([Mat 17:5](#))^A It is for people who, having heard that command, are abandoning their allegiance to any and all the prolific sects of this world ([religious](#) and otherwise). Truth seekers must leave behind all who assert it is “they” who are our solution and hope; that it must be their group to lead us to a better life. It is for those who see the folly of [religion](#) (being very different from true Christianity) and politics and racial affiliations, seeing them all as just gangs trying to accomplish their own will. *This means is your life: If you have been listening to Christ, you should have been* (or be) *building a faith that defines what you see as your future.* The future you foresee thus amounts to your faith. *And, it is your God given responsibility to build faith in what is real, by listening to the words of Christ* (available only in [Matthew](#), [Mark](#), [Luke](#) and [John](#)). ([Mark 9:7](#)) This letter is not so much about the scriptures that should form the foundation of Christian faith. There are several booklets on the website to help you learn the basic promises of God, which should then become your faith. This letter is for mature Christians interested in understanding and strengthening their own personal faith. ([1 Cor 3:1-11](#))

Before reading this, then, or rather to understand it, you should be familiar with the supporting scriptures from some of the booklets linked on the opening page of [JustBibleTruth.com](#): “Open Letter: [People of Earth](#)” is one and “[You are Marked](#)” is another:

([JustBibleTruth.com/OpenLetterToAll.pdf](#) and [JustBibleTruth.com/YouAreMarked.pdf](#))

^A (**Matthew 17:5 ESV**) He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; *listen to him.*" [[Mark 9:7](#); [Psa. 2:7](#); [Gen. 22:2](#); [Isa. 42:1](#); [Deut. 18:15](#)]

This vision is for those who recognize it is the [tribulation](#) destroying our world; and so believe Jesus's promises things are going to get worse before [Armageddon](#) makes them better. ([Mat 24:21-22](#);^B [Rev 16:14-16](#)) It is for those who recognize we are living in the world portrayed by the artist in his graphic below. His viewpoint was titled simply: [Armageddon](#).



If he upgraded his art today, it might include a Russian tank running over a car full of women and children, as airplanes bomb schools and hospitals; while the world talks tough and looks on... Not since Hitler has anyone demonstrated for the whole earth how dangerous one wicked man, in control of a nation of people, can be. Not since Hitler has a world power targeted a tiny nation's women and children and civilian population. Hitler was a mad man desperately seeking nuclear power. Some say the world still exists only because he failed in his quest. After Hitler bankrupt his nation and humiliated his people, as well as himself, he shot dead his girlfriend and then himself. Our modern destroyer

^B (**Matthew 24:21, 22**) ²¹ for then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again. ²² In fact, unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved; but on account of the chosen ones (or ones being chosen) those days will be cut short (by Armageddon).

already has nuclear power... While Putin pretends peaceful intent, he is burning thousands of Ukrainian women and children such that he has demoralized his military and humiliated his whole nation. Russia will have to face what they let Putin influence them do. Hatred for Russia will not be turned back. Ukrainians would have been pleased to allow Russian troops to withdraw. After so much harm, I suspect they will want to kill every single one. As Putin now crows he “will win” against this tiny nation, he has likely disgraced himself (and his nation) too much to stop now. Even if he does, this legacy has become who he is. Every person seeing his face, including those forced to praise him, will see a loathsome, cowardly, ugly murderer of women and babies. As he continues to witness God’s work in the earth (by allowing the tribulation Putin is escalating), Putin will have to know he will soon receive what he deserves. ([Gal 6:7-8](#)) How horrible will that be; for him! The world powers, including China, now utter prayers to their respective Gods, while they wait in hope the true God will strike Putin down; or that the Russian military have safeguards to prevent him from committing suicide by thermonuclear world war. Remember in the midst of it all, though, Jesus’s promise: When human works have made it so bad life on earth is about to be destroyed, God will step in. ([Mat 24:3](#); [Mat 24:7](#); [Mat 24:14](#); Note: [Mat 24:21-22](#); [Luke 21:25-28](#)) [*Democratic nations, of course, are also failing under the burden of zero integrity and greed, shown in those individuals and groups openly resisting the rule of law; as we now witness in the breakdown of society (such that people just go into stores in gangs and steal what they want). That just proves the laws they have resisted were absolutely necessary for free nations to exist (under human rule).*] If you are one who recognizes all this danger, you likely share my need to understand how to proceed once in possession of such knowledge... So, then, ***what is the process for protecting ourselves and staying alive?***

I believe I have found the one simple answer: It is ***having absolute and unquestioning faith in Christ***. My problem is, I don’t know if I can take (or am taking) advantage of knowing that answer. Not questioning if God has made the solution available, mind you, but whether I have required faith.

Jesus said we can do anything by having true faith! He illustrated over and over the great importance of faith. When Jesus came walking to his disciples on water, for example, Peter asked to also walk

on water. Jesus told him to come and Peter walked toward him on the water. As Peter looked around at the terrible storm, he became afraid; his faith waivered and he started to sink. He refocused his attention on Jesus and called out in renewed faith. Jesus then saved him from a watery grave. ([Mat 14:25-31](#))^c From Peter's example, it is plain we need strong *and unwavering* faith. It is also clear that means remaining focused on Christ, but just how?

Does your faith rest with you alone? With God's help, of course, it does. A Jewish woman, for example, had suffered many years with a flow of blood. Her health problem made her unclean according to Jewish Law; which meant she could be put to death for being out of quarantine and in public. Still, she grew up learning the Jewish prophecies about the coming Messiah and she had heard about Jesus and what he was doing. So, she approached Jesus in a crowd in an effort just to "touch his outer garment." Why? Because "she had faith" her doing so would help. After her approach, Jesus stopped and looked around asking who touched him. His disciples questioned what he was talking about since there were people all around with several touching him. He said someone touched him for he "felt" or "perceived, power go out" of him. The woman then came trembling to confess what she had done. Apparently, Jesus didn't know anything about this woman until he felt spirit from his Father flow out of (or through) him to heal her. Jesus simply said, "Daughter, ***your faith has made you well.*** Go in peace and be free of your grievous sickness." ([Mark 5:34 of 25-34](#))^d Jesus often told people he assisted it was their own faith that helped or cured them. It

^c [Matthew 14:25-31 GNB](#) Between three and six o'clock in the morning Jesus came to the disciples, walking on the water. (26) When they saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. "It's a ghost!" they said, and screamed with fear. (27) Jesus spoke to them at once. "Courage!" he said. "It is I. Don't be afraid!" (28) Then Peter spoke up. "Lord, if it is really you, order me to come out on the water to you." (29) "Come!" answered Jesus. So Peter got out of the boat and started walking on the water to Jesus. (30) But when he noticed the strong wind, he was afraid and started to sink down in the water. "Save me, Lord!" he cried. (31) At once Jesus reached out and grabbed hold of him and said, "What little faith you have! Why did you doubt?"

^d (Mark 5:34) ³⁴ He said to her: "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be in good health from your grievous sickness."

was Peter's own faith that helped him walk on water; and, it was Peter's own faith that let him down... That's what I now perceive, then, is my need to have faith to accept and/or seize the promises of God.

([John 14:12-14](#)) If you are a person having faith, you should be both thankful and proud. You can take pride because your faith and resultant faithfulness is a choice you must make; but thankful because it is a choice which God has chosen to cherish in you. God forgive me if I am wrong about this, but even God can't create a faithful person. Faithfulness is your choice and God will protect you for making it. He loves even those who refuse his guidance, of course, but going against him causes only harm to everyone. He simply cannot tolerate that! ([Acts 17:30-31](#)) If He did, it would always be as it is today and there could be no peace for anyone! (See: [JustBibleTruth.com/CanGodForeseeYourFuture.pdf](#))

How can we have true faith; a faith based on what Jesus actually taught. Jesus often told people it would happen (or had happened) to them according to their own faith. ([Mat 9:27-29](#); [Mat 8:5-13](#)) He also told them if they had just a little bit of faith, they could do basically anything. ([Mat 17:14-20](#); [Luke 17:5-6](#)) He illustrated that by Peter's walking on water, and by the untold numbers of healings and resurrections and other ~~miracles~~ *unusual things* Jesus did by using his Father's spirit. ([Luke 6:17-19](#)); [John 5:19](#); [1 Cor 15:28](#)) He said we can do whatever we need using the Spirit through our own personal faith, and, that we should ask our Father for promised blessings having "faith" we will receive them. ([Mat 21:21-22](#); [John 16:23-24](#))

Do we have faith that will support us? Peter did, but then, Peter didn't! Do we even believe the account about Peter walking on water? That's the thing I believe we are all judging about ourselves: Are we really listening to Christ, and, do we "really" believe? ([John 3:19](#))^E It doesn't seem we could have true faith in Christ if we don't actually believe the entire Bible account about him. During all my own youth, even while trusting in my (imagined excellent) faith in God, I now believe I actually let myself down by choosing to be a "cause and effect" kind of

^E ([John 3:19](#))¹⁹ Now this is the basis for judgment, that the light (Jesus Christ) has come into the world but men have loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were wicked.

guy. If I couldn't understand how something worked, and repeat it at will, I didn't really believe in it (to the extent of believing it could happen to me). It finally dawned on me, my so called "logical" thinking had become my God. I believed in my own logic more than God's word. And, I must confess, it's hard to let go of that mindset. I believe Peter walked on water and I'm trying to really believe I can do similar things; according to my own faith and my own "spiritual" needs; harmonizing God's will, of course. Peter was part of the fledgling Christian congregation: Christianity being brought to birth in the midst of religious persecution. Peter's walking on water no doubt helped many of Christ's followers have faith. The Bible now provides a record of Peter's walk, and of many other miracles performed through Jesus; all recorded to help everyone who will listen have faith. My need, then, is not to walk on water. You probably don't need to walk on water either. You have the inspired record of Peter already having done that. What I do need, is the same thing you do need, to be able to lay hold on promises like those recorded in [Job 33:13-30](#).^F I need to believe all God's promises about my future. ([Psa 37:29](#))^G That includes an unshakeable faith God will protect me alive in the midst of the tribulation surrounding me us. ([2 Chron 20:17a](#)^(H); [Psa 91:7 of 1-16](#)^(I); [Mark 16:18](#); [John 11:25-26](#)) *Electing to build faith is the same choice you*

^F **Job 33:13~30** (Highlights only.) Why do you accuse God of never answering our [prayers] complaints? (14) Although God speaks again and again, (*God speaks in our day through the words of Christ - [Mat 17:5](#)*) no one pays attention to what he says... (18) He will not let them be destroyed; he saves them from death itself... (22) they are about to go to the world of the dead... (24) In mercy the angel will say, "Release them! They are not to go down to the world of the dead. Here is the ransom to set them free." (25) Their bodies will grow young and strong again... (28) He kept me from going to the world of the dead, and I am still alive." (29) God does all this again and again; (30) each one saves a person's life, and gives him the joy of living.

^G (**Psalm 37:27-29**)²⁷ Turn away from what is bad and do what is good, And so reside to time indefinite. ²⁸ For יהוה is a lover of justice, And he will not leave his loyal ones. ו [A'yin] To time indefinite they will certainly be guarded; But as for the offspring of the wicked ones, they will indeed be cut off. ²⁹ **The righteous themselves will possess the earth, And they will reside forever upon it.**

^H (**2 Chronicles 20:17**)¹⁷ YOU will not need to fight in this instance. Take YOUR position, stand still and see the salvation of יהוה ([God's Hebrew Name](#)) in YOUR behalf.. . .

^I (**Psalm 91:7a**)⁷ A thousand will fall at your very side And ten thousand at your right hand; To you it will not come near...

need to make; and, even if you refuse to realize, you are already making it. (JustBibleTruth.com/YouAreMarked.pdf) The question I am writing this letter about, while I try to answer it about and for myself: ***Do I (we) have faith to seize and/or receive those promises by God; and then, what is the process for doing that?*** Jesus said we can choose to cry out all day long about our great faith (in him), no doubt indicating such people would be sincere, even while they remain workers of lawlessness. ([Mat 7:22-23 of 15-23](#))^J ***All that means is it is possible to believe we have faith in Christ, without ever really “listening” to “him.”*** ([Mark 12:24](#))^(K); [John 8:31-32](#))^(L) So... Shouldn't we each ask: Do I really have a faith “in what I personally know Jesus taught;” to protect me when I need it?

So then, do I have true faith? Do You? I ask God often to receive what He has promised (including those promises in [Job 33](#)).^(F) Even with my incessant praying, however, I can't tell I'm regaining youthful vigor and strength; or even just holding my own. Does that mean it isn't happening? Do I just need to keep on asking in faith, without wavering? My neighbor and friend Mike is six months younger. Our parents were friends when we were born so we've known each other from first memories. While I'm trying to be better about realizing and respecting the feelings of others, I now comprehend, I “preached at” Mike for several years; sometimes more than I should and when he didn't really want to hear. He has been very patient with me (as he “turned the other cheek” to my thoughtlessness). As we both have health problems consistent with getting older, he recently asked in some detail about how I'm getting along. Since I've been telling him for years I ~~hope~~ *plan* to live forever, ([Job 33:13-30](#))^(F) I suspect... (But I only suspect what I'm about to say, mind you, and I apologize to Mike if I'm wrong. I do ~~sometimes~~ *often* misunderstand what people are trying to say.) So, back to my point: I suspect Mike might have been interested in how my faith and my claims

^J **(Matthew 7:22, 23)** ²² Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works in your name?’ ²³ And yet then I will confess to them: I never knew YOU! Get away from me, YOU workers of lawlessness.

^K **(Mark 12:24)** ²⁴ Jesus said to them: “Is not this why YOU are mistaken, YOUR not knowing either the Scriptures or the power of God?”

^L **(John 8:31, 32)** ³¹ And so Jesus went on to say to the Jews that had believed him: ***“If YOU remain in my word, YOU are really my disciples,*** ³² and YOU will know the truth, and the truth will set YOU free.”

of living forever are working out for me (possibly my grandiose fairy tale claims, of course, if what I believe proves untrue). That's natural, really, for people to desire to see how it turns out for those asserting they are God's servants. The Bible Book of [Esther](#) illustrates that point; while also being a short and encouraging read. If you do read it, please pay special attention to the "friends" of Mordecai (from the Book of [Esther](#)). The Book is different from other Bible Books because the promised appearance of Jesus Christ as the Messiah is the central [theme of the Bible](#). So... Most Bible accounts are about people who are the forefathers and foremothers of Christ (and about those who surrounded them). David, Abraham, Mark, [Ruth and Rahab](#), for example, are all connected with the lineage of Christ. Not so Esther and her uncle Mordecai. They lived about 500 years before Christ and there is no indication either was connected to his lineage, beyond their being Jews. Esther and Mordecai, along with a man named Haman, are the principle characters. Haman was an Amalekite. The Amalekite nation was first to attack the Israelites after the Jews came up out of Egypt. Over the 500 years that followed, they showed such hatred for God's people, God told King Saul (a little over 1000 years before Christ and 500 years before Esther), to exterminate all the Amalekites. Saul failed... In the book of Esther, then, Haman again showed the reason for God's decree of destruction, because Haman and his people tried to kill all the Jews in the kingdom where they lived. The Book of Esther seems, at least in part, to highlight the execution of God's judgment against the Amalekite race (and soon now, for the last time, against all who are wicked). There are no Amalekites today. The Book of Esther shows how God can defend and protect his faithful servants right in the midst of destroying his (and their) enemies. ***Another interesting lesson from the book, and the reason I mention it, surrounds the action by the "friends" of Mordecai.*** Haman gained national power such that everyone was required to bow to him. As a Jewish worshipper of יהוה, however, Mordecai refused to bow to Haman. (יהוה is God's [Hebrew Name](#) – Sounds to English speakers like Yea•Vah, as in "Yea" go team followed by Vah, like the first two letters of vault.) Mordecai's friends at first warned him he should bow to Haman because they feared he was putting himself in danger. When Mordecai told them he would or could not bow to Haman, because he was a worshipper of [יהוה](#), his "friends" went straight away and told Haman Mordecai was not bowing. (Haman had surely noticed.) Why would his "friends" do that? They obviously

liked Mordecai enough to warn him, so, why would they then run to tell Haman. The Bible explains they wanted to see if Mordecai's "affairs would stand, because he had told them he was a Jew." Was that bad? His friends had likely heard about the Jews being set free from Egypt and about "the vast mixed company" of non-Jews that were freed with them; and maybe, about Jericho and the nations being subjugated by their Jewish God. So... They wanted to see if יהוה (just a [different font](#)- first letter [at right] looks a bit like an apostrophe, followed by a small n with a break in its left upright, then a capitol I and finally another broken n) could really protect Mordecai, no doubt based on Mordecai's very publicly asserted relationship with יהוה. They likely hoped they would also be set free of the tyrant Haman (which actually did happen). The actions of God recorded in the Book of Esther survive as an eternal touchstone to God's power and justice: Many of Esther and Mordecai's friends no doubt became Jewish proselytes and so worshipped the true God. For our Christian day in time, as was the account of Peter's walk on water, the works of Esther and Mordecai are recorded in some measure to strengthen the faith of all who read about them. God thus expects us to use their examples to build faith. Then, he expects us to stay (or even keep ourselves) alive by means of that faith. There is something else to consider: If יהוה openly performed miracles today, wouldn't people flock to him because of those miracles; without caring what is right and good? Today, then, we live by faith. ([Rom 1:16-17](#))^M As God helps his followers stay alive forever, ([Job 33:13-30](#))^(F) it probably is not (or won't be) discernable by others. (After everyone is marked [[judged](#)], and hope is no longer being extended, God will no doubt begin helping his friends openly in front of everyone and for all to see. – [Heb 10:26-27](#)) In my own case, if God is helping me, it probably can't be known even to me. If I "knew," where would my own faith be? ([Rom 10:8](#))^N Albeit, I certainly do long for

^M (**Romans 1:16, 17**) ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the good news (Christ's teachings); it is, in fact, God's power for salvation to everyone having faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek; ¹⁷ for in it God's righteousness is being revealed by reason of faith and toward faith, just as it is written: ***"But the righteous one—by means of faith he will live."***

^N (**Romans 10:8**) ⁸ But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your own mouth and in your own heart"; ***that is, the "word" of faith, which we are preaching.***

the days I no longer need faith. ([Rom 8:24-25](#)^o) If I knew God was helping me, though (so as to be able to prove it), I'm not sure I could keep from just telling everyone. ([Mark 7:36](#) of 31-37) So the point... Maybe God's "faithful" followers are already being protected, indicated only by their still being alive amongst the wicked of this old world. ([Psa 91:5-12](#)) [*That is not asserting everyone who dies is wicked. There may be some being protected, some being destroyed by יהוה, and some just dying from the tribulation. Those in the last group may be resurrected. The point is: Become one who יהוה is protecting.*] Maybe I would have been dead long ago apart from God's protecting me toward this very day. This evening I felt my heart flutter and act up. It wasn't really distressing for me, however, as I just took a deep breath and uttered a prayer; being confident it would be all right. It went away. Was that God's protection? (Please don't misunderstand. I have a really good doctor and see him when needed. I am not suggesting anyone abandon their doctor. My wife and I are vaccinated and will probably get our Covid boosters soon. While I believe God will help me, I also believe he gave me a good doctor. That's all just part of my faith, however, and is under constant refinement by my listening to Christ.) What I believe about all these things represents "my" faith. How you feel about them, well, that's your faith! Your own faith is what I encourage you to consider very seriously. Justifying my faith is why I have convinced myself I write this. ([1 Pet 3:13-15](#)) I must confess about my own faith, however, it seems to waver (I think like *young* Peter's did). When I am active in study of the Bible, such as in writing this letter, or when talking to someone about the Bible promises by Jesus, my faith is strong and I really believe what I hope is also what is happening. So right now, in this moment, I believe I have God's protection. When I watch TV or do other things that don't build (or that detract from) my faith (in the Bible), my faith ebbs and begins to feel like something I hope in and want to believe, more so than actually believing it. And that is my concern: I fear just wanting to believe is not enough.

My purpose in life thus seems obvious: I must extend my "moments" of true faith into an everlasting robust faith that can protect

^o (**Romans 8:24, 25**) ²⁴ For we were saved in [this] hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for when a man sees a thing, does he hope for it? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we keep on waiting for it with endurance.

me alive, forever; every second of every minute of every... How, though, do I achieve that? Simple: By hearing and believing God's command to listen to his son. ([Mark 9:7](#))^P So then, obeying God means reading and re-reading [Matthew](#), [Mark](#), [Luke](#) and [John](#) to the point of familiarity.

For me, that must include abandoning all the religious (and other) sects I have been misled to be part of; those who taught me it was my membership in their group that could protect me and/or help others. If you want to remain among the majority of humankind, each looking to one of those [groups](#) (religious, political, racial or gang memberships) for help, this letter is probably not for you. If are one of the meek people of this world who seek to know the true God, then by all means, listen. ***My message really only amounts to (or can be summed up in) this: You must recognize what it means to really "listen to Christ." (1 Cor 11:1)***^Q If you are seeking peace from the true God, one thing you should do is print this little booklet (using "Adobe Reader" booklet print software, available on most Windows PCs and in public libraries) and give it to everyone you know. Humanity must be warned they need to ~~listen to~~ *hear* Jesus before the end can come. ([Mat 24:14](#)) This tribulation can drive people to search for God, but being herded toward some [religious membership](#) doesn't help. ([Isa 45:22-25](#))^R Don't you want all this suffering to be over? I surely do; which energizes me to warn everyone! Make an effort to share this knowledge with every person you know, so as to fulfill [Matthew 24:14](#) and speed us to the end.^S Amen, come quickly Lord Jesus. ([Rev 22:20-21](#)) We are favored to be alive to witness Christ's coming (return). Do you believe? ([John 11:25-26](#))

^P ([Mark 9:7](#)) ⁷ And a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud: "This is my Son, the beloved; listen to him."

^Q **1 Corinthians 11:1 MWT** You must follow my example, but only as I follow the example of Christ.

^R ([Isaiah 45:22-25 MWT](#)) Turn to me and be saved, all you who live at the ends of the earth; because I am יהוה. There is no other God besides me! (23) I have bound myself with an oath. A righteous word has gone out from my own mouth that will not be recalled, "Every knee will bow to me and every tongue will acknowledge me." (24) It will be said of me, "Certainly, righteousness and strength are found in יהוה alone." All who are angry with him will come to him and be ashamed. (25) All the descendants of Israel ([Gal 3:7](#); [Gal 3:28 & 29](#)) will be declared righteous, and they will praise יהוה.

^S ([Matthew 24:14](#)) ¹⁴ And this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come.

We all do one thing that we need to be cautious not to let others “do to” us: We try and encourage (convince) others to have the same faith we have; because, well, we all believe we’re right... That’s natural and the Bible even encourages it – assuming our faith is really built on the words of Christ (and our goal to direct everyone “to Jesus”). ([1 Pet 3:15](#))^T But, Jesus himself warned we must be careful not to allow people to lead us into “their” faith. Faith really just amounts to what we reason out and choose to believe; while (if we are wise) we are very careful all we believe comes directly from the lips of Christ. Jesus warned there would be false prophets ([Mat 7:22-23 of 15-29](#))^(EE) as he also warned against “reasoning” out our own understanding. In one of his many warnings against being misled by religious people (and their leaders), Jesus told his followers to beware the leaven of the Pharisees. They didn’t understand what he meant. Instead of just asking Jesus to explain, however, they went “reasoning among themselves.” They wrongly concluded Jesus must be telling them they failed to bring along any bread. “Oh you of little faith,” he said, “why do you reason among yourselves?” Jesus explained his meaning (and warning) was simply that they needed to beware the “teachings” of their religious leaders. ([Mat 16:5-12](#))^(U); [James 1:22](#))^(V) The Bible does teach us the proper way to reason on our faith. When young Mary had just given birth, visitors were directed by angels to inform her (and those in attendance) Jesus was the promised savior of mankind; that

^T **(1 Peter 3:15)** ¹⁵ But sanctify the Christ as Lord in YOUR hearts, always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of YOU a reason for the hope in YOU, but doing so together with a mild temper and deep respect.

^U **(Matthew 16:5-12)** ⁵ Now the disciples crossed to the other side and forgot to take loaves along. ⁶ Jesus said to them: “Keep YOUR eyes open and watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” ⁷ So they began to reason among themselves, saying: “We did not take any loaves along.” ⁸ Knowing this, Jesus said: “Why are YOU doing this reasoning among yourselves, because YOU have no loaves, YOU with little faith? ⁹ Do YOU not yet see the point, or do YOU not remember the five loaves in the case of the five thousand and how many baskets YOU took up? ¹⁰ Or the seven loaves in the case of the four thousand and how many provision baskets YOU took up? ¹¹ How is it YOU do not discern that I did not talk to YOU about loaves? But watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” ¹² Then they grasped that he said to watch out, not for the leaven of the loaves, but for the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

^V **(James 1:22)** ²² However, become doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves with false reasoning.

he would bring great joy and peace among all people of goodwill. Mary had previously been visited by the angel announcing Jesus coming birth, ([Luke 1:24-38](#)) and had heard John the Baptist's mother Elizabeth prophesy about her (Mary's) unborn son. ([Luke 1:39-56](#)) She had read the Old Testament prophecies about the coming Messiah. As to how we can "properly reasoning" on things, then, the Bible explains how Mary "reasoned" by telling us she went "storing all these sayings, drawing conclusions in her heart." ([Luke 2:1-20](#) of 1:1-2:20) Put simply: Mary learned everything she could about Jesus, carefully using God and his angels as her only source. Then, using all the facts she could gather, she reasoned on what she knew God had said must mean; *without drawing conclusions beyond what she could know*. We must do likewise: Learn all you can about Jesus, being blessed today with the gift and opportunity to read much of what "Jesus actually said" (recorded in [Matthew](#), [Mark](#), [Luke](#) and [John](#)). Then, build your faith on Jesus's words; while being careful not to be influenced by humans. ([Mat 17:5](#)) You will then be among those blessed when your reasoning (along with everyone else's) is uncovered. ([Luke 2:35 of 2:25-35](#)) Faith thus seems to depend not so much to our reasoning ability, ([Mark 2:5-12](#)) but more on our actually listening to and obeying Jesus. Another thing that requires is being very careful what "meaning," or "teaching from God," we attribute to things that happen to or around us. As an example: Roger, an old friend from my high school days, recently tried to help by encouraging I read a series of religious books about the rapture. He feels they helped him. Soon after we talked about them, my wife and I stopped to visit Brad and Bernadette. They are friends who I/we also talk with about the Bible. Bernadette mentioned and urged me toward that same series of books. Subsequently, I told Roger about my conversation with Bernadette. Roger quickly reasoned God must be telling me to read that book series, since it seemed clear God directed both he and Bernadette to encourage me toward the books at nearly the same time. Roger's logic was good. Did he, however, consider all the facts? Even perfect logic, rendered on incomplete or wrong information, produces bad results. God did not tell me to listen to the author of some series of books. What God did very specifically tell me is to listen to his son. ([Mat 17:5](#))^(A) Then Jesus, serving as God's appointed teacher, warned over and over about the danger of listening to other men and women; *as Jesus clearly stated he must be our only teacher*. ([Mat 23:8 of 1-15](#))^(W) Roger might have been right

about God directing the three of us... Maybe what God wanted me and Roger and Bernadette to consider, however, is whether we might all be better served listening to Christ rather than to the author of the book series. ([Mat 23:1-15](#))^w That's what all three of us are left to decide about our shared encounter. Hearing about it saddles you with the need to decide that same thing... "Whoa," I'm guessing you're now saying, "Why, then, am I listening to you" when I could be reading the words of Jesus? Valid question and still more faultless logic. You would definitely be better served listening to Christ! Please note however: I'm not saying not to listen to anyone, I'm just saying to carefully compare everything they say against the teachings of Christ. ([1 Cor 4:6](#))^x Put more simply, any

^w (**Mat 23:1-15**) . Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying: 2 "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the seat of Moses. ([Ex 18:13](#))* 3 Therefore all the things they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds, for they say but do not perform. 4 They bind up heavy loads and put them upon the shoulders of men, but they themselves are not willing to budge them with their finger. 5 All the works they do they do to be viewed by men; for they broaden the [scripture-containing] cases that they wear as safeguards, and enlarge the fringes [of their garments]. 6 They like the most prominent place at evening meals and the front seats in the synagogues, 7 and the greetings in the marketplaces and to be called Rabbi (teacher) by men. 8 ***But you, do not you be called Rabbi, for one is your teacher, whereas all you are brothers. 9 Moreover, do not call anyone your father on earth, for one is your Father, the heavenly One. 10 Neither be called 'leaders,' for your Leader is one, the Christ. 11 But the greatest one among you must be your minister. 12 Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*** 13 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut up the kingdom of the heavens before men; for you yourselves do not go in, neither do you permit those on their way in to go in. 14 -- 15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you traverse sea and dry land to make one proselyte, and when he becomes one you make him a subject for Gehenna twice as much so as yourselves. ***Note regarding Ex 18:13: Moses was appointed by God as judge to the ancient Jewish nation. The scribes and Pharisees were a priestly community, not judges. Like modern religious leaders, however, that didn't stop them from setting themselves up as judges over the people. Instead, they should have started directing individuals to listen to Jesus as God's Messiah, along with warning each person they are judging themselves by their response to Christ's words.*** ([John 12:46-50](#))

^x (**1 Corinthians 4:6 MWT**) Now, brothers, these things I say so as to apply to myself and Apollos for your good, that you may learn the [rule]: "Do not go

teacher should be able to tie everything they teach to the Bible (and to the words of Jesus). ([2 John 1:9](#))^Y If not, you are in danger of listening to false prophets. ([Mat 7:15-23](#))^(EE) Be careful of people believing (and teaching) using scriptures out of context. While we can certainly learn by listening to others, we must at the same time (and constantly) guard we are not being misled by them. ***It doesn't matter if someone says you must wear a turtle shell helmet to please God, or they are misapplying something Jesus himself said, it's still a false teaching and belief in it can kill you.*** So... While I do my best to share and explain my own faith in Jesus, I caution my faith should not become your faith. Your faith should be carefully based on what you personally know Jesus Christ taught. I offer only food for thought as I direct you always to carefully listen to Christ, and so, build faith you know can protect you alive. This letter, then, is simply my explanation of "how" I'm trying to build such faith; a faith that doesn't waver in times of need. Maybe you can use some of the same methods of approach to God (through Christ, of course) that I do o... ([1 Cor 11:1](#))^(Q)

In my mind, then, my faith is tied literally to the words of Jesus. So, I read from the Gospels ([Matthew](#), [Mark](#), [Luke](#) and [John](#)) a lot. Additionally, I got some (easy to understand) recordings of the Gospels by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. I listen to them when I travel in my truck and often during the night, especially when I have trouble sleeping. ***Remember this always: Jesus said his Father's spirit was in the words he spoke.*** ([John 6:63](#))^Z He said he was the bread that came down from heaven ([John 6:28-33](#))^{AA} and that we should eat his flesh and drink

beyond the things that are written in the scriptures," in order that you may not be puffed up individually in favor of the one against the other.

^Y (**2 John 1:9-11**)⁹ Everyone that pushes ahead and does not remain in the teaching of the Christ does not have God. He that does remain in this teaching is the one that has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If anyone comes to YOU and does not bring this teaching, never receive him into YOUR homes or say a greeting to him. ¹¹ For he that says a greeting to him is a sharer in his wicked works.

^Z (**John 6:63**) It is the Spirit that gives life. The flesh does not profit, nothing! The Words which I speak to you are spirit and are life.

[[Deu 8:3](#); [Ps 119:50](#); [John 6:68](#)]

^{AA} (**John 6:28-33 BBE**) (28) Then they said to him, How may we do the works of God? (29) Jesus, answering, said to them, This is to do the work of God: to have

his blood. ([John 6:48-58](#))^{BB} He said we should take in waters of life from him. ([John 4:7-26](#))^{CC} Those different illustrations all mean (in my understanding) we should learn (to live on) what Jesus taught. They also explain what the Bible means in saying it is “alive and exerts power.” ([Heb 4:12-13](#)) Not just hearing Jesus’s words once, mind you, but many times to gain an intimate familiarity with what he taught. In doing so, you

faith in him whom God has sent. (30) So they said, What sign do you give us, so that we may see and have faith in you? What do you do? (31) Our fathers had the manna in the waste land, as the Writings say, He gave them bread from heaven (manna). (32) Jesus then said to them, Truly I say to you, What Moses gave you was not the bread from heaven; it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. (33) The bread of God is the bread which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.

^{BB} (**John 6:48-58**) ⁴⁸ “I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ YOUR forefathers ate the manna in the wilderness and yet died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that anyone may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever; and, for a fact, the bread that I shall give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world.” ⁵² Therefore the Jews began contending with one another, saying: “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” ⁵³ Accordingly Jesus said to them: “Most truly I say to YOU, Unless YOU eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, YOU have no life in yourselves. ⁵⁴ He that feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life, and I shall resurrect him at the last day; ⁵⁵ for my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ He that feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood remains in union with me, and I in union with him. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me forth and I live because of the Father, he also that feeds on me, even that one will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven. It is not as when YOUR forefathers ate and yet died. He that feeds on this bread will live forever.”

^{CC} (**John 4:7~26**) ⁷ A woman of Sa·mar'i·a came to draw water. Jesus said to her: “Give me a drink.” ⁸ (For his disciples had gone off into the city to buy foodstuffs.) ⁹ Therefore the Sa·mar'i·tan woman said to him: “How is it that you, despite being a Jew, ask me for a drink, when I am a Sa·mar'i·tan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Sa·mar'i·tans.) ¹⁰ In answer Jesus said to her: “If you had known the free gift of God and who it is that says to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.” ¹¹ She said to him: “Sir, you have not even a bucket for drawing water, and the well is deep. From what source, therefore, do you have this living water? ¹² You are not greater than our forefather Jacob, who gave us the well and who himself together with his sons and his cattle drank out of it, are you?” ¹³ In answer Jesus said to her: “Everyone drinking from this water will get thirsty again. ¹⁴ Whoever drinks from the water that I will give him will never get thirsty at all, but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water bubbling up to impart everlasting life. . . (**John 4:25, 26**) ²⁵ The woman said to him: “I know that Mes·si'ah is coming, who is called Christ. Whenever that one arrives, he will declare all things to us openly.” ²⁶ Jesus said to her: “I who am speaking to you am he.”

come to actually know both Jesus and his Father. The Bible refers to that as becoming a spiritual man or woman, and/or, as putting on the mind of Christ. ([1 Cor 2:14-16](#))^{DD} If we make that effort, the teachings of Christ will be within us to answer any questions that might arise. It is our modern day way (or method) of being able to ask Jesus anything, and being able to do so right inside our own mind and heart; anytime, anywhere. It sets us free of dependence on any human or group. ([John 8:31-32](#))^(L) I am convinced that is also how we have Jesus present within us so as to draw God's spirit by means of him (just like the woman with the flow of blood chased him down to do). ([John 15:16](#); [John 14:12-14](#)) If we know him intimately, we don't have to track him down to touch his garment in order to get help by his Father's spirit.^(CC) Jesus resides within us, along with his Father's spirit, living in our knowledge of (and obedience to) Christ's words. When reading or listening to the words of Christ, then, I consciously try to accept [יְיָ'ס](#) spirit as it comes to me born on (or in) Jesus's words. So, you see, my faith is that my own faith brings me God's spirit. Your faith must help you know God, but it must be your faith, not an imitation of mine. We must each one of us know Christ intimately, but that is very different from just saying we know him. ([Mat 7:22-23 of 15-23](#))^{EE} You must avoid being misled by any religious sect (or other gang) that promises it is your membership in (and/or support of) their group that can help you.

^{DD} (**1 Corinthians 2:14-16**) ¹⁴ But a physical man does not receive the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot get to know [them], because they are examined spiritually. ¹⁵ However, the spiritual man examines indeed all things, but he himself is not examined by any man. ¹⁶ For "who has come to know the mind of Jehovah, that he may instruct him?" But we do have the mind of Christ.

^{EE} (**Matthew 7:15-23**) ¹⁵ "Be on the watch for the false prophets that come to YOU in sheep's covering, but inside they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruits YOU will recognize them. Never do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, do they? ¹⁷ Likewise every good tree produces fine fruit, but every rotten tree produces worthless fruit; ¹⁸ a good tree cannot bear worthless fruit, neither can a rotten tree produce fine fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree not producing fine fruit gets cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Really, then, by their fruits YOU will recognize those [men]. ²¹ "Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens will. ²² Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works in your name?' ²³ And yet then I will confess to them: I never knew YOU! Get away from me, YOU workers of lawlessness.

Knowing Christ is in some sense a solitary mission. Faith puts you in the midst of a whole huge crowd of other faithful men and women who also love God, ([Heb 12:1 of 10:35-12:3](#))^{FF} of course, but you must personally

^{FF} (**Hebrews 10:35-12:3**)³⁵ Do not, therefore, throw away YOUR freeness of speech, which has a great reward to be paid it. ³⁶ For YOU have need of endurance, in order that, after YOU have done the will of God, YOU may receive the [fulfillment of the] promise. ³⁷ For yet “a very little while,” and “he who is coming will arrive and will not delay.” ³⁸ “But my righteous one will live by reason of faith,” and, “if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.” ³⁹ Now we are not the sort that shrink back to destruction, but the sort that have faith to the preserving alive of the soul. **11** Faith is the assured expectation of things hoped for, the evident demonstration of realities though not beheld. ² For by means of this the men of old times had witness borne to them. ³ By faith we perceive that the systems of things were put in order by God’s word, so that what is beheld has come to be out of things that do not appear. ⁴ By faith Abel offered God a sacrifice of greater worth than Cain, through which [faith] he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness respecting his gifts; and through it he, although he died, yet speaks. ⁵ By faith E’noch was transferred so as not to see death, and he was nowhere to be found because God had transferred him; for before his transference he had the witness that he had pleased God well. ⁶ Moreover, without faith it is impossible to please [him] well, for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him. ⁷ By faith Noah, after being given divine warning of things not yet beheld, showed godly fear and constructed an ark for the saving of his household; and through this [faith] he condemned the world, and he became an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith. ⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed in going out into a place he was destined to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, although not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he resided as an alien in the land of the promise as in a foreign land, and dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the very same promise. ¹⁰ For he was awaiting the city having real foundations, the builder and maker of which [city] is God. ¹¹ By faith also Sarah herself received power to conceive seed, even when she was past the age limit, since she esteemed him faithful who had promised. ¹² Hence also from one [man], and him as good as dead, there were born [children] just as the stars of heaven for multitude and as the sands that are by the seaside, innumerable. ¹³ In faith all these died, although they did not get the [fulfillment of the] promises, but they saw them afar off and welcomed them and publicly declared that they were strangers and temporary residents in the land. ¹⁴ For those who say such things give evidence that they are earnestly seeking a place of their own. ¹⁵ And yet, if they had indeed kept remembering that [place] from which they had gone forth, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But now they are reaching out for a better [place], that is, one belonging to heaven. Hence God is not ashamed of them, to be called upon as their God, for he has made a city ready for them. ¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, as good as offered up Isaac, and the man that had gladly received the promises attempted to offer up [his] only-begotten [son], ¹⁸ although it had been said to him: “What will be called ‘your seed’ will be through Isaac.”

draw to יְהוָה (or, you must make your approach to יְהוָה) on your own; by building your own private faith in Christ. No one can lead you there except through their encouragement to listen to Jesus. ([1 Cor 11:1](#))^(Q)

¹⁹ But he reckoned that God was able to raise him up even from the dead; and from there he did receive him also in an illustrative way. ²⁰ By faith also Isaac blessed Jacob and E'sau concerning things to come. ²¹ By faith Jacob, when about to die, blessed each of the sons of Joseph and worshiped leaning upon the top of his staff. ²² By faith Joseph, nearing his end, made mention of the exodus of the sons of Israel; and he gave a command concerning his bones. ²³ By faith Moses was hid for three months by his parents after his birth, because they saw the young child was beautiful and they did not fear the order of the king. ²⁴ By faith Moses, when grown up, refused to be called the son of the daughter of Phar'aoh, ²⁵ choosing to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin, ²⁶ because he esteemed the reproach of the Christ as riches greater than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked intently toward the payment of the reward. ²⁷ By faith he left Egypt, but not fearing the anger of the king, for he continued steadfast as seeing the One who is invisible. ²⁸ By faith he had celebrated the passover and the splashing of the blood, that the destroyer might not touch their firstborn ones. ²⁹ By faith they passed through the Red Sea as on dry land, but on venturing out upon it the Egyptians were swallowed up. ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jer'i-cho fell down after they had been encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith Ra'hab the harlot did not perish with those who acted disobediently, because she received the spies in a peaceable way. ³² And what more shall I say? For the time will fail me if I go on to relate about Gid'e-on, Ba'rak, Samson, Jeph'thah, David as well as Samuel and the [other] prophets, ³³ who through faith defeated kingdoms in conflict, effected righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ stayed the force of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from a weak state were made powerful, became valiant in war, routed the armies of foreigners. ³⁵ Women received their dead by resurrection; but other [men] were tortured because they would not accept release by some ransom, in order that they might attain a better resurrection. ³⁶ Yes, others received their trial by mockings and scourgings, indeed, more than that, by bonds and prisons. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were tried, they were sawn asunder, they died by slaughter with the sword, they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, while they were in want, in tribulation, under ill-treatment; ³⁸ and the world was not worthy of them. They wandered about in deserts and mountains and caves and dens of the earth. ³⁹ And yet all these, although they had witness borne to them through their faith, did not get the [fulfillment of the] promise, ⁴⁰ as God foresaw something better for us, in order that they might not be made perfect apart from us. **12 So, then, because we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us,** let us also put off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests, that YOU may not get tired and give out in YOUR souls.

Knowing Christ means (or requires) an intimate familiarity with what he said. You can only get to know יהוה (The Hebrew Name of God) through Christ, and that by reading the Gospel recordings of Jesus's life and teachings. (Mat 11:27 of 25-30)^{GG} You will then know both Jesus and his Father, (Pro 30:4)^{HH} and, you will have יהוה's spirit to help you. (John 16:22-24)^{II}

OK. If we follow God's command to listen to Christ, what ~~can~~ should we learn? One thing is to turn the other cheek: To be slow to anger or to take offense. (Mat 5:39)^{JJ} Wouldn't it be a wonderful world if everyone was like that? That's God's purpose in allowing this tribulation to happen, to remove wickedness and create such a world. (Isa 54:13-15) Wouldn't it be even more wonderful, however, if we didn't ever "need" to turn the other cheek; because there wasn't anyone striking us? God is doing that too! The only way I know to explain what I mean is by using another personal experience; something that just happened to help enlighten me. My old friend Max Worthington served with me in Vietnam many years ago. He lives several hundred miles away but we still keep in touch. He and I and Wayne Shadel (another veteran from our squad) shared some photos a few years back and put them on a website. (<http://www.vietnamjc.com>) Max previously sent some pictures and wrote me a letter (about 5 years ago - 2016) of his recollection of a firefight wherein he was wounded. His letter got mislaid, but I found and went over it a few days ago. While I think he

^{GG} (Mat 11:27b) ...The only one who truly knows the Father is the Son. But the Son wants to tell others about the Father, so that they can know him too.

^{HH} (Proverbs 30:4 ESV) (4) Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? [What is his name](#), and [what is his son's name](#)? Surely you know!

^{II} (John 16:22-24) ²² YOU also, therefore, are now, indeed, having grief; but I shall see YOU again and YOUR hearts will rejoice, and YOUR joy no one will take from YOU. ²³ And in that day YOU will ask me no question at all. Most truly I say to YOU, If YOU ask the Father for anything he will give it to YOU in my name. ²⁴ Until this present time YOU have not asked a single thing in my name. Ask and YOU will receive, that YOUR joy may be made full.

^{JJ} (Matthew 5:38, 39) ³⁸ "YOU heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth.' ³⁹ However, I say to YOU: Do not resist him that is wicked; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other also to him.

wrote it before our website, his letter seemed appropriate material for VietnamJC.com (and so I posted it). To do that required we first scan the letter to convert it from paper to an electronic text file. That process introduced errors we had to go back and correct. As we corrected those errors produced by the Optical Character Recognition software, I also chose to trim out part of “Max’s” letter to brief it up a bit. I wrote asking his belated permission as I told him we had posted his letter on our website, and about my alterations. As I subsequently thought about what I had done, my conscience started to bother me. Who was I, really, to imagine I had the right to edit (shorten) Max’s letter. I apologized and sent him the scanned electronic copy of his letter, complete with introduced errors; and asking him to edit it as he sees fit and I will post “his” letter. Max said it was alright and that I hadn’t offended him at all. That didn’t surprise me. What would have surprised me, actually, was if Max had taken offense. Max and Wayne were my friends and teammates at a time we had to put our lives in the hands of those around us. Whether or not Max took offense at my thoughtless actions, however, has nothing to do with the point I’m herein trying to make. What I learned about myself, and what I am now trying to share, is this: While it is “Christian” for Max (and all of us) to turn the other cheek and not be offended, I also believe Jesus came to teach us not to be “offenders”: We must all learn to “stop” forcing other people to turn the other cheek. My being so brash as to feel free to edit Max’s letter, without prior permission, was wrong. Even asking to do so would be wrong. Max wrote that letter to convey something he wanted known. Who am I to imagine I have any dog in that race. I feel my actions, although not spiritual in nature, provide a perfect illustration of what is wrong with modern [religion](#) (being very different from Christianity). All religions start with a doctrine of faith that separates and distinguishes their members from what they judge to be the “lost” portion of humanity. Their doctrine (judgment) then causes them to feel they are superior as God’s elect and have the right to decide for and direct others. Then, they establish leaders over their sect. Each sectarian group is then led to believe everyone must be an approved member of their group to be approved by God. That all flies in the face of what Jesus taught. ([Mat 23:1-15](#))^(w) What he said was we should have respect for those who express faith in him,

whether or not they are “following us or our group.” ([Mark 9:38-40](#))^{KK} It occurs to me that is the greatest slap you can give another person, to assert they are lost to God because they don’t agree with you and/or follow your sect. And, that’s what [religion](#) always does. That’s all good to know, but what about my own motives, you may ask. What about my efforts at all this self-awareness? Is it because I love God and Christ and am trying to be obedient and helpful? That is my hope and my belief, of course, but is it really so? Do you like me more, now, because of my humility and openness? (I wouldn’t want anyone to miss that as my attempt at some little humor... Maybe?) I do know I want people to like me; while at the same time I want to please God. So... What are my real motives? That’s precisely what we are all ~~displaying and deciding~~ *deciding and displaying* about ourselves; “if,” that is, we are actually listening to Christ. Understanding (exposing) ourselves is not easy. There are some very religious people who publicly judge me to be an enemy of God because of the things I herein say. All religious people have a desire to protect the religious sect they are lords and ladies among. They all perceive my directing people to Christ (without acknowledging any need for any of them) to be an assault on their faith and their sect. If they are not directing people to Christ, I suppose, what I say actually is an assault; exposing their failure and badness (or [ignorance](#))! Truth is, as I said, I’m not completely sure about even my own motives. There is no reason for me to pretend otherwise (or certainly to judge others); God knows! ([Jer 17:9-10](#))^{LL} God starts by allowing each of us to first decide who we are. ([JustBibleTruth.com/CanGodForeseeYourFuture.pdf](#)) Then, He comes to know us based on that [choice](#). He thus knows us by, or as, our response to his command to listen to his son. ([John 3:19 of 16-21](#))^(E)

I don’t know what your faith is. That is your business. What this letter is, is my best attempt to understand and explain my own self. ([1 Pet 3:15](#))^(T)

^{KK} ([Mark 9:38-40](#)) ³⁸ John said to him: “Teacher, we saw a certain man expelling demons by the use of your name and we tried to prevent him, because he was not accompanying us.” ³⁹ But Jesus said: “Do not try to prevent him, for there is no one that will do a powerful work on the basis of my name that will quickly be able to revile me; ⁴⁰ for he that is not against us is for us.

^{LL} ([Jeremiah 17:9, 10](#)) ⁹ “The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it? ¹⁰ I, יהוה (God’s Hebrew [Name](#)), am searching the heart, examining the kidneys, even to give to each one according to his ways, according to the fruitage of his dealings.

Don't follow me, though, or imitate my faith; or do that with any other human or sect of them. Follow Christ and imitate his faith. ([Mat 11:27](#))^(GG) As to who among us has true faith (a faith based on Jesus's words), we will all soon see. ([Hos 10:4](#); [Psa 91:7-8 of 1-16](#)) The only real hope I know lies in listening to Christ and using his teachings to ~~try and~~ become a better person every day I am favored to have life. I suspect our learning from Christ may go on forever, or at least, for a very long time.

In closing, I must confess I don't even "know" if God is good. I try and have faith he is good; because of what I read in the Bible and believe I see in creation. ([Rom 1:18-2:11](#)) I try and have faith God is good because Jesus was so sure of it, he gave his very life to a horrible death to prove it was so. ([Luke 23:46](#)) The Bible tells Jesus was rewarded for his sacrifice with not only eternal life, but also life within himself. ([John 5:26](#))^{MM} What does that even mean? If Jesus has life within himself, it seems he is no longer dependent on his Father for anything. Does that mean he is completely equal with God? Personally, I don't think so; but, I certainly don't know. Such questionings are made irrelevant, however, by something else the Bible teaches. It prophecies Jesus, "after" being given such freedom and independence, will once again submit himself to his Father יהוה. ([1 Cor 15:20-28](#))^{NN} On the day I witness Jesus joyously fulfill that prophecy, by resubmitting himself to יהוה, I (and all sane creation) will absolutely know for sure and forever that God is good. At the mouth of the two most powerful beings in the universe, יהוה's sovereignty will

^{MM} ([John 5:26](#))²⁶ For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted also to the Son to have life in himself.

^{NN} ([1 Corinthians 15:20-28](#))²⁰ However, now Christ has been raised up from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep [in death].²¹ For since death is through a man, resurrection of the dead is also through a man.²² For just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive.²³ But each one in his own rank: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who belong to the Christ during his presence.²⁴ Next, the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has brought to nothing all government and all authority and power.²⁵ For he must rule as king until [God] has put all enemies under his feet.²⁶ As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing.²⁷ For [God] "subjected all things under his feet." But when he says that 'all things have been subjected,' it is evident that it is with the exception of the one who subjected all things to him.²⁸ But when all things will have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone.

be established forever. If there were any possible improvement to God's way of doing things, Jesus wouldn't give up his freedom to resubmit to his Father... My faith now is based in part on my "reasoning" the Bible message is the only thing that makes sense and affords any real hope. I look forward to the day I will know my Father face to face without any need for faith. ([John 16:23-24](#)^(II); [Mat 5:8](#)^(OO) [1 Cor 13:12-13](#)^(PP)) May יהוה bless and keep you forever, based, of course, on your faith in your own personal knowledge of the words of his son...

All said, the closest I have come to real and complete joy exits in those glorious moments when or while I feel close to God as the result of patterning my mind over the words of his son. In sharing these spiritual truths, I feel joy. In such periods, as I am able to give myself completely in thanks to God for life and breath and all good things, and especially for the ability to learn from his son so as to truly know him; I am deliriously happy. ([Mat 11:27](#))^(GG) Tears of happiness fill my eyes and often spill down my cheeks. In these moments, I feel the inrush of God's spirit within (or by means of) that joy overwhelming me. ([John 15:11](#))^{QQ} That only happens through (or by) meditating on the words of Jesus Christ. Those moments of glory feel like my personal time to visit with יהוה. While I am then filled with the joy of knowing יהוה (God's personal Hebrew [Name](#)), it feels like my time for my healing and nurturing; bathing in his spirit. In my mind, it compares with Adam's personal relationship with God in the pre-sinful Garden of Eden. ([Gen 2:19](#))^{RR} Because it is personal and spiritual, I barely understand and I certainly can't explain. When I'm in those moments, I'm "in" and couldn't

^{OO} (**Matthew 5:8**)⁸ "Happy are the pure in heart, since they will see God.

^{PP} (**1 Corinthians 13:12, 13**)¹² For at present we see in hazy outline by means of a metal mirror, but then it will be face to face. At present I know partially, but then I shall know accurately even as I am accurately known. ¹³ Now, however, there remain faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

^{QQ} (**John 15:11**)¹¹ "These things I have spoken to YOU, that my joy may be in YOU and YOUR joy may be made full.

^{RR} (**Genesis 2:19**)¹⁹ Now יהוה (God's [Name](#)) God was forming from the ground every wild beast of the field and every flying creature of the heavens, and he began bringing them to the man to see what he would call each one; and whatever the man would call it, each living soul, that was its name.

possibly talk about it. When it's past, all I have is the memory, so I still can't really explain. In this moment, I'm wishing I hadn't tried; because explaining flushed my mind and heart of God's spirit of joy. Reading over or talking about Christ's words help bring that spirit, but trying to explain the mechanics of my faith really doesn't. Simply directing you to Christ and to the solution I see in his words, that does. You must find friendship with God on your own, but only through the words of Christ.

([Mat 11:27](#))^(GG) You can't buy faith. You can't steal faith. You can't coerce it or be gifted it by powerful individuals or groups. We all must get it by building our own personal faith in Christ, starting with intimately knowing what he actually said in [Matthew](#), [Mark](#), [Luke](#) and [John](#).

Warning: I believe world conditions are going to continue to get rapidly worse. That is, however, the basis for our deliverance. ([Luke 21:28](#); [Mat 24:21-22](#)) If the [tribulation](#) doesn't get worse, it means I am ignorant and should be easily forgotten. But, if it does, keep what I say close in mind as a source of hope and life... ([Psa 91:7-11](#)) *Every strongly religious person wants to convince you my faith, and what I say to you, is just another Church or Religion; one that is just different from theirs. Most tell you we have turned the corner and things are getting better. Don't be fooled! (1 Thes 5:2-3)* What I say is very different from anything you have heard before; unless you have actually heard Christ Jesus. Hearing Christ can be tricky, however, with so many deceivers. ([Mat 7:15](#)) Every religion wants you to believe joining them and their sect is your help. *Please recognize the great difference in what I say: I only want you to join Christ. And, I warn you, "I" can't take you there. Neither can any other human nor group. You can only get yourself there by reading the Words of Christ from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.* Put in different words, you must produce good fruitage. ([Mat 7:15-20](#)) And, as Jesus said, good fruit is easy to identify: Good fruitage is simply directing people to Christ and to him alone; while bad fruitage is directing people to any human or sect of them. It's just so simple, really!

Joe M. Cummings, Christian ([Acts 11:26b](#))^{SS}

Praise [יְהוָה](#) you people! ([Jer 20:12-13](#))^{TT}

^{SS} ([Acts 11:26b](#)) . . .and it was first in Antioch that the disciples were by divine providence called Christians.

^{TT} [Jeremiah 20:12, 13 MWT](#) But you, O [יהוה](#) (*The Hebrew [Name](#) of God*) of armies, are examining the righteous one; you are seeing the kidneys and the heart. May I see your vengeance upon them, for to you I have revealed my case at law. 13 Sing to [יהוה](#) , YOU people! Praise [יהוה](#) ! For he has delivered the soul of the poor one out of the hand of evildoers.



Why Now? God's judgment is being revealed against all [religion](#) (religion being different from Christianity): The churches ruled the earth in bloodshed using Christ's name for over [a thousand years](#); beginning 300 or 400 AD (after Christ's Death).

While the Churches have already been stripped of most of their power, God is now destroying false religion in all its forms. If you want life, you must escape.

([Rev 17:3-7](#); [Rev 17:15](#); [Rev 17:8](#); [Rev 18:4-8](#))

This reflects my faith. ([1 Pet 3:13-15](#)) It is a faith to a work even greater than Jesus did; because it is a faith to life without ever tasting death... ([John 14:12](#)) [[JustBibleTruth.com/BibleTeachingsBySubject.pdf](#) → Greater Works.] This is written for you, of course, but even more so for me. I re-read the scriptures often to retain faith. My faith therefore adjusts as it grows. If I am a mature Christian, it seems, there shouldn't be much change going forward. As I read my hope today (May 2022), I attempted to clarify a couple of points and to add a few supporting scriptures. Apart from that, my faith remains the same as when this was written. This writing helps me both understand, and then explain, precisely what it is I believe. It brings joy as it helps me build my faith. ***This is, please deeply consider, my attempt to produce a blueprint for building faith; for the preservation of ~~our~~ your life!*** ([Gen 45:4-5](#)) If this Bible truth strums your heartstrings, ([Hos 11:4](#)) as it does mine, please let me know: Email me at support@justbibletruth.com - 270-343-2030. I won't contact you back unless you request it; or use or share any information about you. I enjoy hearing from those who share faith in what Jesus said. If you are one having heard God's command to listen to his son, ([Mat 17:5](#)) and are thus breaking free of all the sectarian false hopes of this world, ([John 8:31-32](#)) that is only (and can only be) possible because you are actually following Christ... I pray my works are reason for God to ~~wish to~~ keep me alive. ([Jam 2:18-20](#)) Each one who is following Christ is already in my prayers. See you soon, then, in the paradise Christ is restoring... ([Luke 21:28 of 25-28](#); [Isa 11:1-12](#); [Psa 37:27-34](#); [Job 33:13-30](#))

For an extended conclusion of this letter, please read:

[JustBibleTruth.com/URAwake.pdf](#)